

Firefighters, Correctional Officers, and Law Enforcement Officers

Any **certified, full-time** firefighter, correctional officer or law enforcement officer not covered under the State Police retirement plan may receive one additional year of retirement credit for every five years of employment for which the member has remitted the appropriate hazardous duty payment. The member must be certified by either 1) the Firefighters Personnel Standards and Education Commission as having a level one minimum standard certification, 2) the State Forester as having met the Wildland Firefighter Training Standard of the National Wildlife Coordinating Group, or 3) the Alabama Peace Officers Standards and Training Commission as a certified correctional officer or certified law enforcement officer.

Each certified, full-time firefighter, correctional officer or law enforcement officer must contribute six percent of salary to the ERS. The member must contribute at the six percent rate on **all** compensation paid by all ERS member employing agencies.

Act 2004-637 permits eligible members participating in the ERS as employees of a city, county, public or quasi-public agency to purchase hazardous duty service credit, provided the member has **not** had a prior period of eligibility to purchase hazardous duty service credit. This provision does **not** apply to state employees.

To obtain the additional credit, the member must pay to the ERS one percent of the higher of his or her current salary or the previous year's salary for each year of claimed service. The service must be purchased in five-year increments unless the total service is less than five years, in which case the service must be purchased in its entirety. An eligible member must purchase service credit by **July 31, 2005**, or within one (1) year of his or her enrollment in the ERS.

The additional retirement credit purchased cannot be used to meet the service requirements for retirement eligibility. The credit will be granted upon attainment of the requisite years of creditable service or when the member qualifies for service or disability retirement. Prior service earned before certification as a full-time firefighter, correctional officer or law enforcement officer cannot be purchased.